

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (currently amended) A tunneler, comprising:

a tip containing gripping means; and

a plurality of flexible connector shaft members having a first end extending from the tip and a second end that is closed, the plurality of connector shaft members having dissimilar unequal lengths; and

a rigid tunneler shaft containing a first end with a tapered section that is closed and a second end proximate the tip.

2. (currently amended) The tunneler of claim 1, wherein each connector shaft member is capable of being retained in the lumen of a catheter.

3. (currently amended) The tunneler of claim 2, wherein the connector shaft member is capable of being retained in the lumen by using a protrusion.

4. (currently amended) The tunneler of claim 1, wherein the difference in the lengths of the connector shaft member ranges up to about 20%.

5. (currently amended) A tunneling system, comprising:

a tip containing gripping means; and

a plurality of flexible connector shaft members having a first end extending from the tip and a second end that is closed, the plurality of connector shaft members having dissimilar unequal lengths; and

a rigid tunneler shaft containing a first end with a tapered section that is closed and a second end proximate the tip.

6. (currently amended) The system of claim 5, wherein each tip connector shaft member is capable of being retained in the lumen of a catheter.

7. (currently amended) The system of claim 6, wherein the tip connector shaft member is capable of being retained in the lumen by using a protrusion that is located near the second end of the connector shaft member.

8. (currently amended) The system of claim 7, wherein the difference in the lengths of the tip connector shaft members ranges up to about 20%.

9. (currently amended) The system of claim 6, further comprising a wherein the tunneler shaft that is removably connected to the tip at the second end.

10. (original) The system of claim 9, further comprising a sheath that covers a portion of the tip and tunneler shaft that are connected.

11. (original) The system of claim 10, wherein the sheath is retained both on the tip and on the tunneler shaft.

12. (original) The system of claim 11, wherein the sheath is retained on the tip using a retaining ring.

13. (currently amended) The system of claim 12, wherein the retaining ring complements a protrusion on a tip the connector shaft member.

14. (currently amended) The system of claim 5, wherein only one tip connector shaft member is capable of being retained in the lumen of a catheter.

15. (currently amended) A tunneling system, comprising:

a tip containing gripping means and a plurality of flexible connector shaft members having a first end extending from the tip and a second end that is closed, the plurality of connector shaft members having dissimilar unequal lengths;

a tunneler shaft having a second end that is removably connected to the tip and a first end capable of creating a tunnel in the skin of a patient, the shaft made of rigid materials and containing a first end with a tapered section that is closed; and

a sheath covering a portion of the tip and the tunneler shaft that are connected.

16. (currently amended) The system of claim 15, wherein each tip connector shaft member contains a protrusion thereon.

17. (original) The system of claim 16, wherein the sheath is retained both on the tip and on the tunneler shaft.

18. (original) The system of claim 17, wherein the sheath is retained on the tip using a retaining ring.

19. (currently amended) The system of claim 18, wherein the retaining ring complements the protrusion on a tip connector shaft member.

20. (currently amended) The system of claim 15, wherein only one tip connector shaft member contains a protrusion thereon.

21. (currently amended) A medical device, comprising:

a multi-lumen catheter; and

a tunneler with a tip containing gripping means and a plurality of flexible connector shaft members having a first end extending from the tip and a second end that is closed, the plurality of connector shaft members having dissimilar unequal lengths, and a rigid tunneler shaft containing a first end with a tapered section that is closed and a second end proximate the tip.

22-25. (canceled).

26. (currently amended) A tunneler, comprising:

a tip containing gripping means;

a tunneler shaft having a second end proximate the tip and that is capable of creating a tunnel in the skin of a patient, the shaft made of rigid materials and containing a first end with a tapered section that is closed; and

a plurality of flexible tip connector shaft members extending from the tip, the plurality of tip connector shaft members having dissimilar unequal lengths and being closed at an end distal the tip; and.

a sheath covering a portion of the tip and the tunneler shaft that are connected.

27. (currently amended) The tunneler of claim 4 27, wherein each tip connector shaft member is capable of being retained in the lumen of a catheter by using a protrusion.

28. (currently amended) A medical device, comprising:

a multi-lumen cathether;

a tunneler, comprising:

a tip containing gripping means;

a plurality of flexible tip connector shaft members extending from the tip, the plurality of tip shaft members having dissimilar unequal lengths and being closed at an end distal the tip and capable of being retained in a lumen of a catheter by using a protrusion on the exterior of the tip connector shaft member; and

a tunneler shaft capable of creating a tunnel in the skin of a patient, the shaft made of rigid materials and containing a first end with a tapered section that is closed.